UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/PRST/1998/9
6 April 1998
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3869th meeting of the Security Council, held on 6 April 1998, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Afghanistan", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has considered the report of the Secretary-General concerning the situation in Afghanistan of 17 March 1998 (A/52/826-S/1998/222).

"The Security Council expresses its grave concern at the continued Afghan war, which is a serious threat to regional and international security, and causes extensive human suffering, further destruction, refugee flows and other forcible displacement of large numbers of people.

"The Security Council is concerned by the increasingly ethnic nature of the conflict, by reports of ethnic-based persecution, and by the threat this poses to the unity of the Afghan State.

"The Security Council urges all Afghan parties to stop the fighting, to agree immediately on a ceasefire, and to engage without preconditions in a political dialogue aimed at achieving national reconciliation, a lasting political settlement of the conflict, which has no military solution, and the formation of a broad-based fully representative government.

"The Security Council reaffirms its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan, and respect for its cultural and historical heritage.

"The Security Council deplores the fact that foreign interference in Afghanistan continues unabated in the form of the supply of war-making materials to the factions. It also deplores the active political and military support from outside Afghanistan to the factions, thereby reinforcing the reluctance of faction leaders to engage in serious political dialogue with one another. The Council reiterates its call to all States to stop such interference immediately.

"The Security Council notes with concern that all the Afghan parties have been actively engaged in arms replenishment throughout the last

months, warns the conflicting parties that the resumption of large-scale fighting will seriously undermine the attempts of the international community to assist them in finding a political solution to the conflict and urges them to live up to their declared desire for such a solution.

"The Security Council reiterates its position that the United Nations, as a universally recognized intermediary, must continue to play its central and impartial role in international efforts towards a peaceful resolution of the Afghan conflict and extends its full support for the activities of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan and those of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, particularly in his current mission in the region.

"The Security Council commends the consolidation of the process, initiated by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan with the convening of the 'six plus two' group, and calls upon all countries involved in it to continue to participate in its work in good faith, including in the discussion to devise effective and impartial ways to curb the flow of arms and other war-making materials into Afghanistan. The Security Council welcomes the support of other Member States for this process.

"The Security Council is deeply concerned by the deteriorating security conditions for United Nations and humanitarian personnel and calls upon all Afghan factions, in particular the Taliban, to take necessary steps to assure their safety.

"The Security Council remains deeply concerned at the continuing discrimination against girls and women and other violations of human rights as well as violations of international humanitarian law in Afghanistan.

"The Security Council supports the steps of the Secretary-General to launch investigations into alleged mass killings of prisoners of war and civilians in Afghanistan, the outcome of which will be submitted to the General Assembly and the Security Council as soon as it becomes available.

"The Security Council is also concerned with the sharp deterioration of the humanitarian situation in several areas in Central and Northern Afghanistan, which is caused by the Taliban-imposed blockade of the Bamyan region remaining in place despite appeals by the United Nations and several of its Member States to lift it, as well as by the lack of supplies coming in from the northern route owing to insecurity and looting. The Council strongly urges the Taliban to let the humanitarian agencies attend to the needs of the population.

"The Security Council reiterates that the continuation of the conflict in Afghanistan provides a fertile ground for terrorism and illegal drug production and trafficking which destabilize the region and beyond, and calls upon the leaders of the Afghan parties to halt such activities.

"The Security Council will remain seized of the matter and requests the Secretary-General to continue to keep it regularly informed of the situation in Afghanistan."